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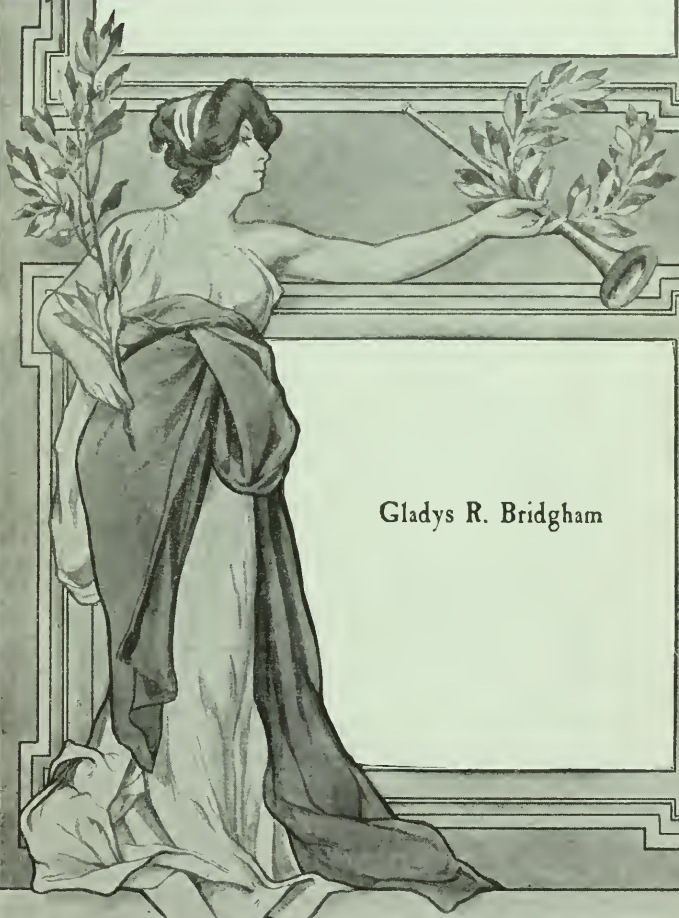
Mrs. Haywood's Help



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THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY
PHILADELPHIA

Mrs. Haywood's Help

A Comedy in Two Acts

By
GLADYS R. BRIDGHAM

PHILADELPHIA
THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY
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Mrs. Haywood's Help

DEC 11 1914

Mrs. Haywood's Help

CHARACTERS

THOMAS HAYWOOD . . *president of N. Y. & C. R. R.*
THOMAS HAYWOOD, JR. . . . . *attorney at law*
JOSEPH CLEMENT . . *reporter on "The New York Spy"*
DAVID SOLOMON ANDREWS . . . *who has just become the ward of Oliver Shepard*
HUBERT AMES . . . . . *a visitor, who tries to steal Mr. Haywood's documents*
KATHERINE . . . . . *who is also Mrs. Haywood, Jr.*
AURELIA SYMONDS . . . . . *her wealthy aunt*
DOROTHEA SYMONDS . . . . . *her young sister*
MARY MOORE . . . . . *Haywood's secretary*
MARION HEREFORD . . *a senior at Crofton Seminary*
NORDICA JOHNSON . . . . . *a colored maid*
JOYCE . . . . . *the wife of Oliver Shepard*

TIME OF PLAYING :—One hour.

STORY OF THE PLAY

The fun in this delightful comedy hinges on a domestic crisis when Mrs. Haywood tries to give her critical father-in-law a peaceful dinner with all her servants gone and eight unexpected guests in the house. Joyce, who has arrived with a secret on her mind, and Dave, just made the ward of the great Oliver Shepard, whose month's disappearance is the talk of New York, volunteer as cook and butler. Many funny incidents result, and a merry evening of misunderstanding is capped by Joyce's revelation that the great Oliver is her husband, and has just returned with her from their honeymoon.

COSTUMES, ETC.

MR. HAYWOOD, SENIOR. About sixty. Conservative business suit.

TOM. Twenty-eight. Enters in business suit. Changes, if desired, to evening dress.

CLEMENT. Twenty-five. Sportily dressed young man.

DAVID. Eighteen. Plain suit, with a cap. Changes to typical butler's livery.

AMES. Thirty. Sprucely dressed business man.

KATHERINE. Twenty-five. Evening gown.

AURELIA. Forty. Enters in stylish traveling costume, changes to evening gown.

DOROTHEA. Twelve. Simple girl's dress, with a big coat and hat.

MARY. Twenty-three. Dark skirt and white shirt-waist.

MARION. Twenty. Enters with big coat and automobile veil over hat.

NORDICA. Sixteen. Black dress. Appears first in shabby coat and hat; later in a white apron.

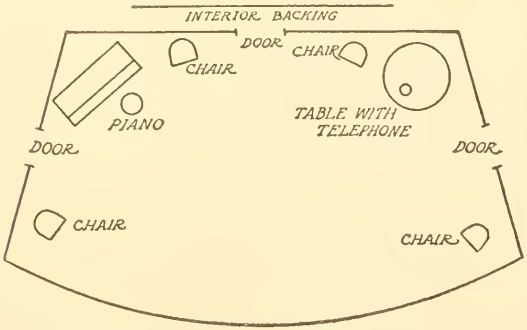
JOYCE. Twenty-five. Enters in traveling costume. Changes to house dress, covered by a large apron.

PROPERTIES

Act I. Flowers in a vase, telegram blank, dog, suit-case, bandbox, fan.

Act II. Tray, wishbone, roll, note-book and pencil, bundle of papers for Marion's manuscript, paper for Mr. Haywood, time-table, cane, bandbox.

SCENE PLOT



Scene.—Living-room in the home of Thomas Haywood, Jr., suburbs of New York. Chair or divan down R. Large mirror R., behind chair.

Mrs. Haywood's Help

ACT I

(*As curtain rises* KATHERINE *stands by table arranging flowers in a vase. Bell rings—pause—bell rings again.* KATHERINE *looks toward* L., *listens—bell rings—she walks to* R. *exit and calls "Buttons!"—then more sharply, "Buttons!" Bell rings—she starts* L. JOYCE *enters* L.)

KATHERINE. Joyce! (*Throws her arms around her.*)

JOYCE (*returning the greeting*). Kit!

KATHERINE. Where did you come from?

JOYCE. Your front door steps. I pushed the button until the battery ran down; then I opened the door and entered. Where, dear one, is your maid?

KATHERINE. Goodness only knows! Joy, I didn't expect you until next week.

JOYCE. No, neither did I. That is, I didn't expect to come until next week. Something happened that brought me east unexpectedly.

KATHERINE. It wouldn't be you unless something did happen. Take off your hat, dear.

JOYCE. No, not yet. You might have callers, and if you did I should like to have them see me with this hat on.

KATHERINE. Joyce, you are just the same as ever. How well you look!

JOYCE. I am. Nothing is the matter with me, never was and never will be. Kit, does it bother you because I have come a week ahead of time?

KATHERINE. I guess not! I never was so glad to see you in my life, and that is saying a good deal.

JOYCE. Why, what is the matter?

KATHERINE. Everything!

JOYCE. Kit, you haven't had trouble with Tom already?

KATHERINE. Oh, no! It isn't Tom. It's his father.

JOYCE. Why, what's the matter with Haywood senior?

KATHERINE. I have never met him.

JOYCE. Never met him?

KATHERINE. No; isn't it ridiculous? You see, we were engaged and married in such a hurry, while he was in Europe. But he's coming to-night.

JOYCE. He is?

KATHERINE. Yes, and I'm nearly frightened to death. I've been about crazy all day. He has been terribly ill, and do you know, his illness has left him stone deaf?

JOYCE. That's a misfortune. Isn't there any help for him?

KATHERINE. Oh, yes! The doctor says he will regain his hearing as suddenly as he lost it, but he can't tell how long it will be. In the meantime, Tom says you have to nearly shout your head off to make him understand one word you say.

JOYCE. Why, you poor thing!

KATHERINE. Pleasant prospect, isn't it? And as if that weren't enough, Tom just telephoned that he is bringing his cousin David Andrews home with him, and if ever a boy got on my nerves! If he should smile the shock would kill him. How I can live with Tom's father and Tom's cousin in the house at the same time is beyond me!

JOYCE. Kit, there's something that I think I had better tell you. (*Bell rings.*)

KATHERINE. Excuse me, just a minute. I shall have to go to the door. I don't know what has become of Buttons. (*Exit* KATHERINE, L. JOYCE *removes her hat, sits down at piano, and begins to play.* KATHERINE *enters with a telegram.*) Oh, Joyce, I have a telegram! What do you suppose has happened? (*Reads telegram.*) Merciful heaven! This finishes things!

JOYCE. What is it, dear?

KATHERINE. Read that! (*Hands telegram to* JOYCE.)

JOYCE (*reading*). "Coming east unexpectedly. Will be with you Thursday. Aurelia Symonds." Who in pity's name is she?

KATHERINE. My father's younger sister. She is worth two million dollars, and knows more than any one else on earth!

JOYCE. Katherine, I really think that I had better be going. It doesn't seem to me ——

KATHERINE. Don't suggest it! (*Walks up and down room.*) You are the only one in the world that I have always been able to depend upon to pull me out of a tight place. If you go I shall lie right down here in the middle of the floor and die!

JOYCE. Well, of course, Kit, if you feel that way, I wouldn't think of leaving you. And now, there is something that I must tell you ——

THOMAS HAYWOOD, JR. (*outside*). Hello, the house! Where are you, Kit?

KATHERINE. There's Tom! (*Exit*, L. *Outside.*) Oh, Tom, I'm so glad you have come! How do you do?

TOM (*outside*). Well, little girl, how are you to-night?

KATHERINE. All right, but terribly nervous. Come in, do! You can't guess who is here.

(*Enter* KATHERINE, L., *followed by* TOM *and* DAVID SOLOMON ANDREWS.)

TOM. Joyce, by Jove!

JOYCE. Yes, Joyce.

(*They shake hands.*)

TOM. Well, well, if this isn't a surprise party! Oh, pardon me. My cousin, David Andrews, Miss Laughton.

(TOM *rings for* BUTTONS. JOYCE *looks at* DAVID.)

DAVID. Miss Laughton.

JOYCE. I'm glad to meet you, Mr. David Andrews. (*Eying him thoughtfully.*)

KATHERINE. Did your father come, Tom?

TOM. Yes, he is in New York. He had some business to attend to, and will be down on a later train. (*Rings bell again.*) Have you any idea why Buttons doesn't answer the bell?

KATHERINE. No, I haven't, Tom. If you will excuse me I will see if I can find him. Joyce, would you like to go up to your room?

(JOYCE *takes up hat and coat and exits*, C., *with* KATHERINE.)

TOM. Sit down, Dave. I'm sorry there isn't something definite to report to you. I have made absolutely no prog-

ress. Your grandmother died just a month ago to-day, and I'm just as much at sea as I was on that day.

DAVID. Then you haven't located my guardian.

TOM. No. The man she appointed as your guardian can't be found. No one who ever had any dealings with Mrs. Stanhope seems to know anything about Oliver Shepard.

DAVID. Tom, you must have made a mistake.

TOM. Nonsense, Dave! Supposing I did, there's my partner, to say nothing of Mrs. Stanhope's attorney.

DAVID. Why, it's ridiculous that he wrote her will and doesn't know which Oliver Shepard she meant.

TOM. You talk with him and you wouldn't think so. Your grandmother was eccentric, to say the least. You are directed to take up your abode in the home of Oliver Shepard and his wife, the latter having full instructions as to how to proceed. And why when he is your guardian is it his wife who has the instructions, and who in pity's name is the Oliver Shepard?

DAVID. I never heard of but one man by that name.

TOM. The great Oliver S? (DAVID *nods.*) Oh, we've looked him up thoroughly. He's out of the question. He isn't married and didn't know Mrs. Stanhope. And doesn't it beat the deuce that he is missing, too? Probably you saw it in the papers?

DAVID. Yes, I did.

TOM. He went away about two months ago on a business trip. Perhaps you have heard that the railroad of which Shepard is the president and the road of which my father is president are to consolidate. They settled on the 27th as the day for the final details.

DAVID (*with interest*). Why, to-day is the 26th!

TOM. Exactly. Father was to meet Shepard to-morrow, and nobody knows whether Shepard is dead or alive. For a month not one word has been heard from him. Father is about crazy. A delay just now is likely to upset everything, for Franklyn Ames of the Western Company is working against dad, and if the thing doesn't go through to-morrow, it's likely never to go through at all.

DAVID. I should think the name Shepard would be burned into your brain. Between my Shepard, and your father's Shepard, you must be having a lovely time. Tom, this is the disagreeable part of my affair. I have been practically my own master for ten years. My grandmother let

me strictly alone. Why should she appoint a guardian over me at this late day?

TOM. On account of the money, of course. When we find Oliver Shepard we shall know how much. Or rather when we find his wife.

DAVID. I'm not sure that I want her money.

TOM. For the love of heaven, Dave, talk sense! Not sure that you want the money?

DAVID. Not if I have to take the guardian, too. The law doesn't say that I must take the money, does it?

TOM. Certainly not! But who ever heard of any one's doing such a thing?

DAVID. Tom, I don't know this Oliver Shepard by sight even, and I've got to be controlled by him for nearly three years. I'll tell you how much I want Mrs. Stanhope's money when I have seen Shepard, not to mention his wife. I'm earning a living. I'll look before I leap, thank you.

(*Enter* KATHERINE *and* JOYCE, C.)

KATHERINE. Tom! Tom Haywood! There isn't a servant in this house! They have gone!

TOM. What?

KATHERINE. Every one! Bag and baggage!

TOM. Nonsense! It can't be. I will go and ——

KATHERINE. You needn't! We have been in every room in the house. They have even taken their things.

DAVID. What ever possessed them?

KATHERINE. Too far out from New York, for one thing. Too much company for another. I don't mean anything personal, but we have had an awful run of company ever since we came down here. To-day when I announced Tom's father they were up and down mad.

JOYCE. How many were there, Kit?

KATHERINE. Three. A cook, and a maid, and Buttons. We might get along to-night, I suppose, if there were just us, although goodness only knows what we should eat! But there's your father, Tom! What will he think to come here and find things in this condition? (*Bell rings.*) Oh, I bet that's Aunt Aurelia! I had forgotten Aunt Aurelia!

TOM (*in astonishment*). Who's she?

KATHERINE (*impatiently*). Oh, you know! Father's younger sister! I received a telegram just before you came.

(*Exit*, L.)

TOM. Good-night! What a mess!

JOYCE (*to* DAVID). Oh, Mr. Andrews, I have an idea. Come in here quick, and let me talk to you!

(*Exeunt* JOYCE *and* DAVID, C.)

(*Enter* KATHERINE *and* AURELIA SYMONDS, L.)

AURELIA (*speaking as she enters*). My dear Katherine, you received my telegram?

KATHERINE. Yes, aunt, I was so pleased. Tom, dear, this is Aunt Aurelia.

AURELIA (*to* TOM). Charmed, I'm sure.

(*They shake hands.*)

TOM. I can't tell you, Miss Symonds, how pleased we are to have you visit us.

(DOROTHEA SYMONDS *runs in* L., *leading a dog. She carries a small suit-case.*)

DOROTHEA. Oh, Kit! I've come! I've come! Hello, Tom! Why, Aunt Aurelia, how do you do? Now, aren't you glad I s'prised you, Kit?

KATHERINE. Dorothea Symonds, where did you come from?

DOROTHEA. Down from New York on the 4:52.

AURELIA. On the train with me? Extraordinary! Which car were you in?

DOROTHEA. Oh, I rode on the platform. They wouldn't let Victor inside.

KATHERINE. Merciful heaven! Where's mother?

DOROTHEA. At Mrs. Grainger's playing bridge.

KATHERINE. And doesn't she know that you are here?

DOROTHEA. Not so you'd notice it!

AURELIA. I always said that my brother's wife wasn't capable of training up a kitten in the way it should go.

DOROTHEA. Aunt Aurelia, you make me——

KATHERINE (*warningly*). Dorothy! Tell me how you happened to come down here, and what ever possessed you to bring that elephant with you?

DOROTHEA. Victor isn't any elephant. He's the best friend I've got in the world, and I wouldn't have come if I

hadn't thought you would be glad to see me. N-n-n-nobody loves me! (*Begins to cry.*)

KATHERINE. There, don't cry, dear. Tell sister how you happened to come.

DOROTHEA. Well, I get so tired of always being alone. Mamma is never at home, and Miss Mitford don't ever say anything but her old French lingo, and do-re-me-re! I get so sick of it all! I guess you would if you were me. Oh, Kit, mayn't I stay with you?

KATHERINE. You will have to stay to-night. There's no way of getting you back to New York before morning.

AURELIA. And now, Katherine, if you think you have bestowed sufficient attention upon the youngest member of the family, you might deign to notice me.

KATHERINE. My dear Aunt Aurelia, I beg your pardon. Dorothy upset me so ——

AURELIA. If you will be kind enough to call your maid, I should like to go to my room.

KATHERINE. Certainly. I—I—I will go up with you myself. (*Exit* AURELIA, L. KATHERINE *starts to follow; looks back.*) Tom, sneak up after us with her suit-case. For heaven's sake, don't let her know anything!

(*Exit,* R., *followed by* TOM.)

DOROTHEA (*stands looking after them*). I can say what I please now. Aunt Aurelia, you're a lemon! (*Telephone rings and* DOROTHEA *answers.*) Hello! Yes. Who? Oh, how do you do? This is Dorothea. Yes, I'm visiting Katherine. What? On your way up here? Now? And Marion? Isn't that lovely! Yes, Katherine will be delighted. I will tell her. Good-bye. (JOYCE *looks in from* C.; *enters, followed by* DAVID. DOROTHEA *throws herself into* JOYCE'S *arms.*) Oh, Joyce! (*To* DAVID.) I guess I don't know you, but I'm pleased to see you.

JOYCE. Mr. Andrews, this is Katherine's sister, Dorothea. (DAVID *shakes hands with* DOROTHEA. TOM *and* KATHERINE *enter,* L.) Your aunt came?

KATHERINE. Yes. She is up-stairs and safe for an hour at least. She is dressing for dinner.

TOM (*sarcastically*). Dinner!

DOROTHEA. Kit, you can't guess who is coming!

KATHERINE. Coming? Who's coming? What do you mean, Dorothea?

DOROTHEA. Hugh Ames just telephoned that he is on his way up here with Marion.

KATHERINE. Hugh Ames? Oh, this is the absolute limit! I wish I'd answered the telephone. I would have given Hugh Ames a piece of my mind.

DOROTHEA (*in surprise*). Don't you want them to come?

KATHERINE. Want them? I wish they were as far the other side of California as we are this side.

DOROTHEA (*thoughtfully*). That would be about in China, wouldn't it? (*Reproachfully.*) Katherine, Miss Mitford says, always make an unwelcome guest feel welcome. Greet him cordially, smile cheerily and say ——

KATHERINE (*walking up and down the room*). Dorothea Symonds, if you don't stop that chatter, I shall certainly box your ears!

TOM. What's the use, Kit? We might as well look at this from a reasonable point of view.

KATHERINE. Reasonable? Reasonable? If that isn't like a man! There are six of us here now. Your father coming. Hugh Ames and Marion!

TOM. By Jove, that reminds me that father said that he is bringing his secretary with him, and wanted to have the house quiet this evening. He is worried about some business matters, and wants my entire attention.

DAVID. He will be likely to get it!

(KATHERINE *goes to telephone.*)

KATHERINE. Hollisford 29.

TOM. What are you going to do?

KATHERINE. Hello! Is this Mrs. Carey? This is Mrs. Haywood. I'm in a little difficulty and thought perhaps you could help me out. I have company coming to dinner and my servants have all stepped out. Could Nora come up for a while? She's in New York? That's just my luck! You don't know any one that I could possibly get? All right. Thank you. Good-bye!—There, that hope is gone. Now, if some one of you will kindly tell me how this surprise party is going to be fed. Why don't you speak? Why don't you speak?

JOYCE. Give me a chance, Kit, and I will. Does any one who is coming here know your cousin?

KATHERINE. Dave? Why, no! Not even Tom's father.

JOYCE. And nobody knows me. (*Takes* DAVID *by the hand.*) Mrs. Haywood, behold a cook and a Buttons. We come highly recommended, and our references are the best. Do we get the job?

TOM. Well, by Jove!

KATHERINE. What perfect nonsense! This is no time to joke!

JOYCE. Joke? I was never more serious in my life. We have been talking it over, and have it all arranged. I will cook some kind of dinner and serve it. Your cousin can tend the door and so forth. As your guests will not see me in the kitchen, they will never know that your maid and your cook are one and the same.

TOM. Joyce, you're a brick!

KATHERINE. You are all that, and more, too, and so is Dave, but I wouldn't let either of you do a thing like that for worlds.

JOYCE. Kit, you can't boil water without burning it. I don't know who you think is going to cook the dinner, unless it's your Aunt Aurelia.

KATHERINE. Aunt Aurelia! Oh, I'll never hear the last of this as long as I live. The family will feel that I have disgraced them.

JOYCE. No, they won't. They will never know anything about it. Kit, you leave everything to us, and we will pull you through some way. (*Bell rings.*) Mercy! That can't be your friends yet, can it?

TOM. No.

DAVID. I'll answer and get used to my new duties.

(*Exit* DAVID, L. DOROTHEA *runs after him.*)

KATHERINE. I shall send Hugh and Marion back the way they come. If they are mad, I can't help it.

JOYCE. No, you needn't. Explain about Tom's father and tell them to keep out of his way. I will serve them a dinner by themselves. Have you a breakfast-room?

KATHERINE. Yes.

JOYCE. I will serve the auto party there and the family party in the dining-room.

TOM. Joyce, this is too much of a good thing! You never could pull it through, even if we allowed it.

JOYCE. Tom, that's no way to talk to a woman. The more you tell me I can't the more sure I am that I can.

DAVID (*entering* L.). Katherine, there's a young colored girl out here who would like to speak to you.

KATHERINE. Speak to me?

(*Enter* NORDICA JOHNSON, L., *carrying a bandbox.*)

NORDICA. Yessum! Mis' Carey done send me over. She said you-all need some one to work fo' yo', an' I'se powerful smart, an' I wants ter earn de money mighty bad. Kin I have de job?

KATHERINE (*doubtfully*). Why—I—I ——

NORDICA. Dey ain't nothin' I can't do 'roun' de house. I kin scrub de flo', an' wash dishes, an' make beds, an' I wants ter earn de money mighty bad! An', oh, yes, I'se fine at takin' care ob babies.

KATHERINE (*stiffly*). There aren't any babies in this house. I don't believe that we require your services, although it was very kind of Mrs. Carey to send you over.

NORDICA. An' don't I git no job?

KATHERINE. No, I'm afraid we haven't anything for you to do.

NORDICA. An' I wants ter earn de money powerful bad! Oh! (*Screams.*)

TOM. For the love of heaven!

DAVID. Shut her off!

JOYCE. Here, stop that noise! Can you wait on the table?

NORDICA. Yessum!

JOYCE. Without spilling a thing?

NORDICA. Yessum!

JOYCE. Keep her, Kit.

KATHERINE. Very well, if you can make use of her.

NORDICA. Den I gits de job?

KATHERINE. Yes. You can stay with this young lady and do just as she tells you. What is your name?

NORDICA. Nordica Johnson. Lan', but I'se pleased. Yo' see, I'se goin' on de vordebil stage jes' soon's I gits a little older, an' I wants ter earn de money ter take some singin' lessons. I'se got a splendid voice. Yo'-all want ter hear me sing?

ALL. No, you needn't mind about it.

(*Enter* DOROTHEA, L.)

DOROTHEA. Hugh Ames is coming down the road.

JOYCE. Come on, quick! Come, Nordica, and you, too, Dorothy!

(*Exeunt* JOYCE, NORDICA, DOROTHEA *and* DAVID, C.)

KATHERINE. I shall die, Tom, I know I shall!

TOM. Well, please don't do it for an hour or so at least. Just try to control yourself while I go to the door.

(*Exit*, L.)

KATHERINE. Brute! (*Walks up and down room.*)

(*Enter* MARION HEREFORD, L., *followed by* TOM *and* HUBERT AMES.)

MARION. Oh, Kit, I'm so glad to see you again!

KATHERINE. Take your things off, dear. (*Shakes hands with* AMES.) It's great to have you come like this.

MARION. Well, you can thank Hugh. It was really his idea.

KATHERINE. Hugh, I congratulate you on your novel and original ideas. (*All sit down.*) You can't imagine how pleased we are.

AMES. I knew you would be delighted to see Marion, and it happened this way ——

MARION. There, Hugh, will you keep still! I guess I'm going to tell Kit how I happened to visit her. You see, to-morrow night is Senior Dramatics, and I have the leading part, so I am excused from lessons to-day. Well, Hugh came up this afternoon with the auto, and ——

AMES. Yes, you had better give me some credit.

MARION. And he invited me to go to ride. I asked Miss Bickford and she said yes, if I would take my book along and study and be back in time for rehearsal to-night. So I rehearsed all the way up.

AMES. Yes, I can testify to that. I could say that play backward. Why don't you come to the part where I distinguish myself?

MARION. Hugh asked where I wanted to go, and I couldn't think of a place. Then he suggested that we come up here and surprise you. I can tell you I didn't have two minds about that. So we started right away, and I'm thankful that I had a play to occupy my mind, for Hugh hasn't talked of a thing but his stomach.

AMES. Yes, Kit, I hope to heaven you've got dinner, and plenty of it, for I had the skimpiest lunch. Not enough to feed a canary bird.

KATHERINE. I really don't know what we are going to have. My—er—cook—is preparing something. I must tell you that Tom's father is coming to-night. He has been seriously ill, and asked Tom if we would have the house quiet. Would you mind not seeing him or letting him know that you are here?

MARION. Why, Kit, we'll turn right around and go back. You have enough on your hands without bothering with us. I am sure that Hugh agrees with me.

AMES. Certainly; come on!

(MARION *begins to put her things on.*)

TOM. Hold on, Hugh! We have it all arranged.

MARION. But it's too much! We had better go!

KATHERINE. Marion, listen! We are going to give you a dinner by yourselves, and you can slip out without Mr. Haywood's knowing anything about it. But after he arrives you will have to amuse yourselves.

MARION. Well, if you are sure it's all right.

AMES. We don't mind amusing ourselves.

MARION. And I can rehearse during dinner.

AMES. Good-night! (*Bell rings.*)

KATHERINE (*to* TOM). That must be your father!

TOM (*looking at watch*). Yes, I guess it is! Do you suppose Dave will answer the bell?

(*Enter* DAVID, C., *dressed as "Buttons."*)

DAVID. Watch me!

(*Exit*, L.)

KATHERINE. Oh, Tom, I'm going to faint. I know I am!

TOM (*fanning her*). Please don't faint just now, Kit! Can't you wait until after father goes?

MARION. We will get out.

AMES. Yes, come on! Shall we go into the library?

MARION. Yes. Isn't this comical? I'm just dying to laugh.

(*Exeunt*, R.)

(*Enter* DAVID, L.)

DAVID. Miss Moore. Mr. Haywood.

(*Enter* MARY MOORE, L., *followed by* THOMAS HAYWOOD. DAVID *exits*, C.)

TOM. I'm glad to see you, Mary. Kitty, dear, this is Miss Moore.

(KATHERINE *greets* MARY.)

HAYWOOD. How do you do, Thomas?

TOM (*shouting*). I'm glad to welcome you to my home, father. This is my wife.

HAYWOOD (*to* KATHERINE). How do you do? How do you do?

KATHERINE. I'm glad to see you.

HAYWOOD. Eh?

KATHERINE (*louder*). I'm glad to see you.

HAYWOOD. Eh?

KATHERINE (*louder*). I'm glad to see you.

HAYWOOD. Eh?

KATHERINE (*shouting*). I'm glad to ——

HAYWOOD. Mary, Mary, come here! What is she saying to me?

MARY. She says she is glad to see you.

HAYWOOD. Is that all? Tell her, Mary, not to address me unless she has something important to say.

MARY. He says, Mrs. Haywood, not to address him unless you have something important to say.

KATHERINE. He needn't worry. When I address him again he will know it.

HAYWOOD. What does she say?

MARY. She says she won't.

HAYWOOD. Tell her I can't hear very well.

MARY. He says that he can't hear very well.

TOM. For pity's sake, Mary, cut it out! My wife understands English.

(*Enter* NORDICA, C. *They all stand looking at her.*)

NORDICA. Oh, Mis' Haywood!

KATHERINE. Yes?

NORDICA. I'se done got ter speak ter yo' on a matter ob a private cha'cter.

KATHERINE. Yes. (*To others.*) Excuse me. (*Takes* NORDICA *one side.*) What is it?

NORDICA. Yo' know de young lady dat's down in de kitchen?

KATHERINE. What has happened? Tell me quick!

NORDICA. She's cookin' de dinner, yo' know?

KATHERINE. Yes, yes! Will you tell me what has happened?

NORDICA. Well, she done tole me to ax yo' bery privately where yo'-all keeps de mustard?

KATHERINE. Oh, heaven! I'll go at once. (*To others.*) You will excuse me, please.

(*Exit* KATHERINE, C., *followed by* NORDICA.)

HAYWOOD. What is the trouble? Mary, Mary, come here! What have they been talking about?

MARY. I believe the cook sent Mrs. Haywood some message in regard to the dinner.

HAYWOOD. Well, I do wish people would talk about something sensible. Do sit down, both of you! Thomas, I am worried to death! Worried to death! Do you realize that to-morrow is the 27th? Do you realize it, I say?

TOM. Yes, sir, to-morrow is the 27th.

HAYWOOD. And do you realize what will happen if Oliver Shepard is not heard from by ten o'clock to-morrow morning?

TOM. I have a faint idea.

HAYWOOD. You have more than that! You know! You know the consequences and yet you sit still and make no move. It's an outrage! I wouldn't have believed it of you!

TOM. Father, every stone has been turned to find Shepard, and you know it. The best detectives! An enormous reward! Everything! He made full arrangements for consolidation before he went west, didn't he?

HAYWOOD. Yes, much against his will. He wanted to wait a month longer! Did you ever hear of such a thing? I was thoroughly disgusted, and his board of directors! Well, I shouldn't care to repeat what they said. Not before

Mary. A month ! A month ! When it isn't safe to wait a day !

Tom. What did he want to wait for ?

Haywood. Wanted to take a vacation. Said we had hammered him to death and he was tired out. If he wasn't so ridiculously young for the position he holds, he wouldn't be such a simpleton.

Tom. H'm ! I wish I had known that before. Well, what's the use of worrying ? There's a strong chance that he will show up.

Haywood. Nonsense ! Not at this eleventh hour ! I believe he is being held until after to-morrow.

Tom. That isn't reasonable.

Haywood. Yes, it is ! Yes, it is ! The Western Company is dead against us, and wouldn't stop at anything. Franklyn Ames is one of the worst ——

(*Enter* Katherine, c.)

Tom. Anything wrong ?

Katherine. No, indeed.

(*Enter* Aurelia, l.)

Aurelia. Katherine, my dear, I—oh, pardon me ——

Tom. Miss Symonds, this is my father.

Katherine. Speak loud, Aunt Aurelia.

Tom (*to* Haywood). Miss Symonds.

Haywood. How do you do ? How do you do ?

Aurelia. Charmed, I'm sure.

Katherine. Miss Moore, Aunt Aurelia.

(Aurelia *greets* Mary.)

Haywood (*to* Tom). Who is she ?

Tom. My wife's aunt.

Haywood. Nice appearing young woman, very. Tell her I can't hear very well.

Aurelia. You needn't have mentioned it. I should never have suspected it. (Haywood *places a chair for her and sits down by her.*) Do you know, I have always wanted to meet you ?

Haywood (*delighted*). Indeed ? Why, may I ask ?

Aurelia. I heard so much of you. You are one of our captains of industry. Oh, our country owes so much to men

like you! (AMES *and* MARION *are heard laughing.*) Katherine, my dear, may I inquire if you are having a party?

KATHERINE. A party? Why—why should you suggest such a thing?

AURELIA. I distinctly heard sounds of mirth.

KATHERINE. That? Oh, that's just my maid and—and—Buttons! They do have the best times together. You never saw any one like Buttons. He's the jolliest little fellow.

(*Enter* DAVID, C., *with an expression on his face of having lost his last friend. He speaks to* TOM *and exit,* C.)

AURELIA. Yes, he has every appearance of it.

HAYWOOD. What is it? Mary, Mary, come here! What is it they are saying?

MARY. Why, they are discussing Mrs. Haywood's Buttons.

HAYWOOD. What's the matter with them? Tell her to sew them on stronger!

MARY. No, no! It is the boy, Buttons.

HAYWOOD. I do wish they would talk about something sensible. Tell them not to talk to me unless they have something important to say.

MARY. He says not to talk to him unless ——

KATHERINE. Well, who's talking to him?

AURELIA. Katherine, I am positively shocked! My dear Mr. Haywood, let us resume our conversation.

HAYWOOD. Delighted, I'm sure.

(KATHERINE *speaks to* MARY *and they go out* R. TOM *follows them to door and stands, nervous and impatient, watching* HAYWOOD *and* AURELIA.)

AURELIA. You know I am so interested in your road. I have heard a rumor of consolidation with the H. and C. line. Is it true? And do tell me what you think of the disappearance of Oliver Shepard?

HAYWOOD. I should really prefer not to say to you what I think.

(*Enter* KATHERINE, R., *and stands by door talking to* TOM.)

AURELIA. How droll you are, Mr. Haywood.

(*Enter* DAVID, C.)

DAVID. Mrs. Haywood, dinner is served.

KATHERINE. At last. (*To* HAYWOOD.) Will you come in to dinner?

HAYWOOD. Eh?

KATHERINE. Will you come in to dinner?

HAYWOOD. Eh?

KATHERINE. Will you come ——

HAYWOOD. Mary, Mary!—er—Thomas! What is she saying?

TOM. She asked you to come in to dinner.

HAYWOOD. Well, I am glad she is capable of saying something sensible. Permit me.

(*Offers his arm to* KATHERINE. *They exeunt*, C.)

TOM. Miss Symonds.

(*Offers his arm to* AURELIA. *They go out* C. DAVID *places the chairs in position and exit*, C.)

(*Enter* JOSEPH CLEMENT, L. *Looks about; takes a little book from his pocket and begins to take notes.* NORDICA *enters*, C.)

CLEMENT. Well, the house is occupied after all. Hello, little chocolate drop!

NORDICA. Hello yo'self, lemon drop!

CLEMENT. Well, well, we're pretty bright at repartee, aren't we?

NORDICA. Well, I couldn' anser fo' yo'. Yo' don' 'pear ter me as if yo's specially bright at anything, but I'll have yo' ter understan' dat I'se bright all de time—breakfast, dinner an' tea!

CLEMENT. That may all be true, but you will have hard work to make any one believe it.

NORDICA. Don' yo' try no funny talk. I'll have yo' ter understan' dat I'se a lady, I is.

(*Enter* DAVID, C.)

DAVID. What's the trouble, Nordica?

NORDICA. I'se sure I don' know, but dis white pusson seems ter tink dat he's some kid. (*Walks toward* L.)

DAVID. See here, Nordica, you must be careful how you speak. The people in this house are Mrs. Haywood's guests.

NORDICA. What diff'rence yo' tink dat makes ter me? I don' keer if he's second cousin ter de President, he ain't gwine ter git fresh wid me.

(*Exit*, L.)

CLEMENT. Can you tell me if Mr. Haywood is in this house?

DAVID. You mean Haywood, senior?

CLEMENT. Yes.

DAVID. He has just gone in to dinner.

CLEMENT. Say I want to see him and see him alone. For the "New York Spy." Get me?

DAVID. Reporter, and you want an interview.

CLEMENT. Your discernment does you credit. Can you manage it?

DAVID. I think it is doubtful.

CLEMENT (*handing him fifty cents*). How doubtful is it now?

DAVID (*looking at the money in astonishment*). Well, I'll be—er—do you need to see him at once?

CLEMENT. Oh, no. Any time within an hour will do, although the sooner the better. (*Comes down*, L.)

DAVID. Well, I'll get you the chance if I can; but you know you are not supposed to be here, and I don't know how he will take it.

CLEMENT. You don't have to tell me that. I expect that I shall make my exit through the roof, but I'll take my chances. Say, Buttons, did you ever hear of Oliver Shepard?

DAVID. Well, rather!

CLEMENT. You don't happen to know where he is?

DAVID. Hardly! I wish that I did!

KATHERINE (*entering* C.). Dave! (*Sees* CLEMENT *standing at* R. *of stage.*) Who's that?

DAVID Mr. Ames' chauffeur, I suppose.

KATHERINE. Oh, is it? I didn't know that Hugh had any one with him. (*Walks toward* CLEMENT.) What is your name, please?

CLEMENT. My name is Clement, and I want to apologize for my intrusion here.

KATHERINE. Oh, not at all! You are quite welcome. I'm sorry that you have been obliged to wait so long for your dinner.

CLEMENT. Why, I—I—I'm sure you don't ——

KATHERINE. Things are rather upset here to-night, and I'm afraid you will have to eat with Miss Hereford and Mr. Ames, and ——

CLEMENT. I am sure you don't understand ——

KATHERINE. If you interrupt me again I shall report you. I am talking. You will tell Mr. Ames that you are to eat dinner with him. (*Enter* MARY, R.) Oh, Miss Moore, I have been looking for you.

(JOYCE *starts to enter*, C., *and exits in a hurry.*)

CLEMENT. Mary!

MARY. You?

KATHERINE. Oh, you have met before?

MARY (*passing* CLEMENT *with her head in the air*). Yes, we have met before. You were looking for me, Mrs. Haywood?

KATHERINE. Yes, I want you to come in to dinner at once. Mr. Haywood is waiting. (*Exit* MARY, C.) David, will you see if the dinner in the breakfast-room is ready? (*Exit* DAVID, L.) Tell Mr. Ames what I said.

(*Exit* KATHERINE, L.)

(*Enter* AMES, R.)

CLEMENT. Is—is this Mr. Ames?

AMES. Yes, it is.

CLEMENT. Well, Mrs. Haywood directed me to tell you that I was to eat dinner with you. My name is Clement.

AMES. Glad to know you, I'm sure.

(*Shakes hands with* CLEMENT.)

DAVID (*entering* L.). Dinner is served.

AMES. Go right in, Mr. Clement. I'll speak to Miss Hereford and we will join you in a second.

(*Exit* AMES, R. *Exit* CLEMENT, L. DAVID *crosses stage to piano. Kneels down and picks up some music.* JOYCE

looks in from C. ; *thinks the room is empty ; enters ; sits down at telephone.* CLEMENT *steps back on to stage from* L. MARION *enters,* R. DAVID *rises and all three stand watching* JOYCE *as she telephones.*)

JOYCE. Schuyler 179. Yes, please. (*Pause.*) Hello! Is that you, Philip? This is Joyce. Yes, thank you, I'm feeling fine. Has Mr. Shepard arrived? No? He is late, isn't he? Well, when he comes, please tell him that I am down at Mrs. Haywood's. Yes. Say, Phil, isn't it a joke? Half of New York would give all they possess to know where Oliver Shepard is to-night, and I am the only one who knows.

CURTAIN

ACT II

(*Ten minutes are supposed to elapse between Acts I and II. As curtain rises* DAVID *stands by door*, L., *looking out. He turns and walks quickly to telephone on table*, L., *and begins to look over the papers on the table.* DOROTHEA *enters*, C., *with her dog.*)

DOROTHEA. Where's Joyce?

DAVID. I don't know.

DOROTHEA. Don't you suppose that we are going to have something to eat pretty soon?

DAVID. I wish I thought that we were.

DOROTHEA. I am so hungry that my stomach goes right in, this way.

DAVID. I can sympathize with you.

DOROTHEA. I wish Joyce would hurry. Victor doesn't look right. I'm afraid he will faint.

DAVID (*looking at dog*). It's a pity he doesn't. We should have one trouble off our hands.

(*Enter* JOYCE, C.)

JOYCE. Oh, here you are, Dorothy, and Buttons, too! Now we will have our dinner.

DOROTHEA. Oh, goody!

DAVID. Me, too?

JOYCE. Well, I should say so! Mrs. Haywood's help are at least entitled to their dinner.

DAVID. Where do we eat it? In the kitchen?

JOYCE. I guess not! It's so hot out there you can hardly breathe. I'm going to bring it in here.

DAVID. Miss Laughton, you are a wonder! How did you manage a dinner in so short a time?

JOYCE. There's nothing wonderful about it. The cook didn't strike until the dinner was prepared. All I had to do was cook the things, and I didn't have to do that to some of them. Case of "Just add the hot water and serve."

(*Exit*, C. DAVID *pulls table to center of stage.*)

DOROTHEA. Here, I'll help you. (*They arrange the table*

and chairs. JOYCE *enters* C. *with a tray.*) Oh, goody! Chicken!

JOYCE (*placing tray on table*). Sir, dinner is served.

DAVID. After you.

(*They sit at table.* JOYCE *and* DAVID *opposite one another,* DOROTHEA *facing audience.*)

JOYCE. It's time Kit had a new cook. There must have been high life below stairs. I never saw such a mess of provisions but once before, and that was on a battle-ship.

DAVID. Can you really cook?

JOYCE. Buttons, as honest as you live, the only thing I ever cooked successfully in my life was an orange pudding.

DAVID. Good land, what did you intend to do when you went down-stairs? You would need an orange grove in the back yard to make pudding for this houseful.

JOYCE. Well—er—of course, if I hadn't found the dinner prepared—but there—we won't worry about what didn't happen.

DOROTHEA. Oh, Joyce, I'm so glad I am here.

JOYCE. Well, I expect you should be anything but glad.

DOROTHEA. Why, I wanted to come, and shouldn't I be glad I've got what I wanted?

JOYCE. Not if it's something that isn't good for you to have.

DOROTHEA. Well, why isn't it good for me to have the things I want, I'd just like to know?

JOYCE. You should think of others. You aren't the only one to be considered. You have made trouble for Katherine and worried your mother.

DOROTHEA. Well, my mother never worries about me at any other time. It's just when she's fussing about the things I do that I oughtn't, and the things I don't that I ought.

DAVID. You are a very fortunate girl to have a mother to worry about you. When I was your age I would have given all the world for a mother to fuss at me about the things I was or was not doing.

DOROTHEA. Did your mother die?

DAVID. Yes, when I was one day old. You see, I never knew my mother at all, and, Dorothea, there has never been a day in my life that I haven't realized that I have lost the

best thing in the life of any boy or girl—a mother's love. Something you have and don't care anything about.

DOROTHEA. Yes, I do, too! You don't know what you are talking about. (*Jumps up.*) I'm going right home now! (*Runs about stage.*) Where's my hat? What did I do with my suit-case? Come on, Vic!

JOYCE (*running after* DOROTHEA). Dorothy, you can't go home to-night! And you mustn't bother Katherine. Come, dear, and finish your dinner.

(JOYCE *sits down at table again.*)

DOROTHEA. I have had all I want, thank you. (*Sits down by dog.*) Oh, Victor, this is an awful wicked world, and I'm one of the worst ones in it, and you're another. You aren't so bad as I am, for I brought you down here. Why did you run away with me? Didn't you know any better than to do things you ought not to do, just 'cause a girl asked you to?

JOYCE. Oh, Buttons, I have the wish bone! Let's wish!

DAVID. It isn't dry enough.

JOYCE. Oh, I bet we can break it. Let's try. Now, wish—wish for the thing you want most to happen.

DAVID. All right.

(*They break the bone.*)

JOYCE. Oh, you've got it! Buttons, I did want that wish.

DAVID. So did I. I wish I had faith to think that this would bring it to me, but it won't. There isn't the least chance. I wished that I might (*regarding* JOYCE *closely*) hear from Oliver Shepard to-night.

JOYCE. You did? Why, Buttons, that's what I wished. That isn't improbable. It's very likely to happen.

DAVID. To you, perhaps, not to me. Your Shepard and my Shepard are not the same.

JOYCE. Oh! Well, then, here's hoping that you hear from yours, and I from mine.

DAVID. Thank you. (NORDICA *enters* C. DAVID *suddenly leans forward across table and says very earnestly.*) Miss Laughton, do you realize what it means to a number in this house to know where Oliver Shepard is?

NORDICA (*interrupting*). Say, yo' no account Buttons, Mr. Haywood is in need ob yo' bery valuable services.

DAVID. You're mighty free with your epithets, Nordica. Any one would think that you amounted to something.

(*Exit*, C.)

NORDICA (*calling after him*). I guess I 'mounts ter as much as yo', yo' pore lily white Button! If I didn't I'd ——

JOYCE. There, that will do for you. If ever you amount to one half as much as that "pore lily white Button" you can thank your lucky stars. Here! (*Puts the tray into her hands and swings her around and pushes her off the stage*, C.) About face! Forward march!

NORDICA (*as she goes through the door*, C.). Fo' de lan's sake!

(JOYCE *keeps a roll, which she eats as she pushes the table back into place.*)

(*Enter* CLEMENT, L.)

CLEMENT. Pardon me, but ——

JOYCE. For what is it that's after ailin' yez? Yer look ez timid ez a sick chicken!

CLEMENT. Who in the name of goodness are you?

JOYCE (*taking a bite out of roll*). Mis' Haywood's cook.

CLEMENT. Yes, you look it!

JOYCE. Sure, yez ain't th' foist young gintlemin that do be after tillin' me that I look above me station in loife.

CLEMENT. Say, you can't jolly me that way. There is no more Irish in your face than there is in mine.

JOYCE. Sure, I'm after thinkin' there ain't so much! Yez see, me father wuz Irish, but me mother wuz Dutch, an' they do say the combination makes me look Frinch!

CLEMENT. You're worse than the chocolate-drop. Mrs. Haywood has certainly got the freshest crowd of help!

JOYCE. To say nothin' of her visitors.

(*Exit*, C.)

CLEMENT. Say, hold on! Confound it!

DOROTHEA. Joyce is an awful joker, isn't she?

CLEMENT. Well, glory be, where did you come from?

DOROTHEA. I didn't come. I've been right here all the

time. You aren't as good at answering back as Joyce, are you?

CLEMENT. Whom did you say?

DOROTHEA. Joyce.

CLEMENT. Some name for the cook.

DOROTHEA. She isn't the cook. Why, you are even easier than I thought you were.

CLEMENT. Who is she?

DOROTHEA. Joyce Laughton.

CLEMENT. Laughton? Laughton? Say, has she been abroad lately?

DOROTHEA. Yes.

CLEMENT. Gee, what a find! Well, will you tell me why Miss Laughton should pretend that she is Mrs. Haywood's cook?

DOROTHEA. Why, you see, Kit ——

CLEMENT. Who's she?

DOROTHEA. Why, my sister, Mrs. Haywood.

CLEMENT. Your sister? Then you are Chauncey Symonds' youngest daughter. Any more of you around?

DOROTHEA. Yes, my Aunt Aurelia is here.

CLEMENT. Miss Aurelia Symonds in this house? Oh, gee! The whole bunch! I'll get enough exclusive to fill a special edition. Well, you were going to tell me a story, Miss Symonds.

DOROTHEA. Oh, I do love to be called "Miss Symonds." Most every one says "little girl."

CLEMENT. Extremely ill bred, I'm sure!

DOROTHEA. Well, Kit's servants all left this afternoon, and all the help she could get was just a colored maid. So Joyce said she would cook and Dave could wait on folks and ——

CLEMENT. Dave? Who's that? Buttons?

DOROTHEA. Yes. He's something to Tom. I don't know what, but he isn't any Buttons at all.

CLEMENT. Good-night! He's probably some millionaire. And I gave him fifty cents!

DOROTHEA. Well, Kit was awful glad to have Joyce cook the dinner, because Tom's father is here and she wants to make a good impression. You know he didn't want Tom to marry her. Wasn't my father mad!

CLEMENT (*taking notes as fast as he can write*). Gosh, I ought to get thirty days for this!

DOROTHEA. Do you want me to tell you some more?

CLEMENT. You bet I do! Miss Symonds, I never was so interested in my life. I could listen to you forever.

DOROTHEA. Oh, you are the nicest young man! I do like you ever so much. Well, my father said that he guessed that Thomas Haywood had forgotten what he arose from. That he could remember the time that Tom Haywood was a New York newsboy without any shoes on his feet, and ——

DAVID (*entering* L.). Mr. Clement, I think I can get you that chance with Mr. Haywood if you want to try it.

CLEMENT. Well, you better believe I do! Miss Symonds, we'll finish our conversation later if you don't mind.

DOROTHEA. All right.

(*Exeunt* DAVID *and* CLEMENT, C.)

(*Enter* JOYCE, R.)

JOYCE. Oh, here you are, Dorothy! What are you doing?

DOROTHEA. Oh, I have been talking to that awful nice young man that you were jollying.

JOYCE. Mr. Ames?

DOROTHEA. Oh, no! He isn't Hugh Ames.

JOYCE. He isn't? Well, who is he?

DOROTHEA. I don't know. Ain't it awful funny that he's always writing things in a little book?

JOYCE. Writing in a book?

DOROTHEA. Yes. We've been talking for the longest time, and he wrote almost all the time. But he didn't write like us. He writes sort of little quirli-gigs.

JOYCE. What have you been telling him?

DOROTHEA. Oh, all about the family. And, Joyce, he was awful interested, for he listened all the time, and never once said, "Little girls should be seen and not heard."

JOYCE. Dorothea Symonds, they ought to keep you in a cage. Come quick! I must stop that fellow from leaving this house!

(*Starts to exit* C. *with* DOROTHEA. TOM *and* KATHERINE *enter* C.)

TOM (*to* JOYCE). You are a wonder! I never ate a better dinner in my life.

KATHERINE. We'll never forget this.

JOYCE. Tell me later. Who is that tall young man?

TOM. Ames?

JOYCE. No, he isn't Ames.

KATHERINE. You must mean Clement. He's Hugh Ames' chauffeur.

TOM. It's queer that I didn't notice him. How do you know that he is Hugh's chauffeur?

KATHERINE. I don't know. Dave told me. What's the trouble, Joyce?

JOYCE. I'm not sure that anything is, but, Tom, I wish you would ask your friend about this fellow, and let me know what he says.

TOM. All right. Here comes Hugh now.

(*Exeunt* JOYCE, KATHERINE *and* DOROTHEA, C.)

(*Enter* AMES, L.)

AMES. Well, old man, you are pulling out of this fine. Your father hasn't laid an eye on us, and we shall be starting back in a short time.

TOM. Hugh, who is that young fellow you brought with you?

AMES. That I brought? You mean Clement?

TOM. Yes.

AMES. I didn't bring him. He's a friend of your wife.

TOM. He is not. Do you mean to say that he is not your chauffeur?

AMES. No. I never saw him in my life until just before dinner. Who said that I brought him?

TOM. Why—er—Buttons.

AMES. Buttons? Just call him. Of all the impudent ——

TOM (*ringing for* DAVID). Hold on, Hugh! There's some mistake.

(*Enter* DAVID, C.)

AMES (*to* DAVID). Did you say that Clement was my chauffeur?

DAVID. Yes, sir.

AMES. What do you mean by lying that way?

TOM. Just a minute, Hugh. David, what made you think that Clement was Mr. Ames' chauffeur?

DAVID. Why, you see, sir, I heard the auto and looked out the window. I saw Clement standing by the auto and he came in right after Mr. Ames and the young lady, and I naturally supposed that he was the chauffeur.

TOM. Yes, of course. Well, what in thunder is he doing in this house?

AMES. Come on! We'll soon find out.

(*Exit* L., *followed by* TOM *and* DAVID.)

TOM (*as he exits*). You're right, we will!

(*Enter* CLEMENT *slowly*, C. MARY *enters*, R.)

CLEMENT. Mary! I've been hoping for this chance.

MARY. Have you? I can't say that I have. There is no possible reason why you should wish to see me.

CLEMENT. There isn't? Well, that's where my opinion differs from yours. A look at you is like sunshine after a long, long storm.

MARY. Indeed? What have you been doing here this evening?

CLEMENT. I have been having dinner with a mighty nice girl.

MARY. Have you, really? Supposing I should tell this girl that you are nothing but a kissing bug?

CLEMENT. Don't you think that's a trifle hard? I did kiss Susy Wilson. There's no use in denying it, for you saw me do it. Heaven only knows why I did it! A minute before I hadn't the least idea of doing such a thing. She—she—just looked kissable, that's all. And I must say it's an awful little thing for you to make such a fuss about.

MARY. You think so? Well, that's where my opinion differs from yours.

CLEMENT. Why, great Scot, Mary, there isn't a fellow on the face of the earth who isn't going to kiss a pretty girl when he can just as well as not, and you ought to know it! No, no! I don't mean that!

MARY. You have said quite enough. I don't care to hear any more. Your conduct was outrageous, considering the fact that you had asked me to marry you.

CLEMENT. That's just the point. That should convince you. You couldn't think I cared anything about her. A

fellow would never think of kissing a girl that he was going to marry. Oh, no! I don't mean that either! Oh, gosh!

MARY. You will kindly remember that I never agreed to marry you unless you succeeded in making good. Well, no one ever heard about anything that you did yet. I'm sure that you are in this house now under false pretenses. I don't know what your game is, but I do know that one word from me will end it.

CLEMENT. That's about enough, Mary. You know how much I care for you. You can raise the deuce with my affections, but you can't interfere with my business. I have an object in being here, and if you stop me, you will be mighty sorry. I am going to make good, and strange as it may strike you, I'm going to do it without either assistance or interference from you.

HAYWOOD (*outside*). Mary! Mary!

CLEMENT. Your employer is calling you.

MARY. Mr. Clement, I ——

CLEMENT. Oh, I wouldn't stand around talking if I were you. You might lose your job.

HAYWOOD (*outside*). Mary! Mary!

MARY. Oh, how I hate you, Joe Clement!

(*Exit*, L. CLEMENT *stands looking after her for a second. Goes to telephone table and begins to look the papers over.*)

(*Enter* JOYCE, C.)

JOYCE. Sure, an' what is it yez after now? I knew it wuz tryin' ter pinch somethin' yez were whin I foist laid me eyes on yez.

CLEMENT. Miss Laughton, I was trying to find the number you called just before dinner when you asked for Oliver Shepard.

JOYCE. Oh, masks off?

CLEMENT. It is probably the best way.

JOYCE. It's much the best way. How do you happen to know who I am?

CLEMENT. Your picture has been in the papers about enough times for you to be easily recognized.

JOYCE. Then, I think you have the advantage of me. I'm afraid I never saw your picture in the paper.

CLEMENT. I am afraid you never did.

JOYCE. And yet I can guess lots of things about you.

You are a reporter, "New York Spy," I would wager almost anything.

CLEMENT. Absolutely correct. My name is Clement. Joseph Clement.

JOYCE. I'm glad to meet you, Mr. Clement.

(*Shakes hands with him.*)

CLEMENT (*in surprise*). Th-thank you.

JOYCE. Let's sit down. You are having rather a lucky find down here, aren't you? Even more than you expected when you came?

CLEMENT. I sure am! I came looking for Haywood, senior, and I don't know how much longer I shall be allowed to play peek-a-boo around here. I ought to get out while my scalp is with me, but I should like to get a whack at him.

JOYCE. Well, don't neglect your present opportunities. Aren't you going to take down any impressions of me? Or perhaps I am not worth the trouble.

CLEMENT. You know how much you are worth, but we fellows aren't all as black as we are painted, and we appreciate courtesy when we are fortunate enough to get it. Nothing goes into the "Spy" about you without your permission.

JOYCE. Oh, then you do have some scruples about what you give to the editor.

CLEMENT. Not very often.

JOYCE. That's what I thought. It seems rather a pity. Don't you ever think of your victims? Don't you realize the harm that comes from the publication of many of your stories?

CLEMENT. There's no reason why I should stop to think of that. You don't understand. Miss Laughton, I have known what it is to walk the streets of New York, day after day, for work which I couldn't obtain. I know what it is to be down to my last nickel. I have work now. I must keep it. Do you wonder that I don't question very deeply the means by which I obtain my story?

JOYCE. No, I don't wonder, but still you haven't won your case. You could be honorable in your work as well as any other man. Do you know who my brother is?

CLEMENT. Surely. Every one knows Philip Laughton. He's the squarest business man in New York.

JOYCE. Thank you. What would you say if I should tell you that he has known what it is to be down to his last nickel?

CLEMENT. I should say that it is incredible.

JOYCE. And yet it is true. Mr. Clement, my father died when I was six years old. My brother was seventeen. Phil came up to New York alone to look for work. His first chance was with the Hereford-Glenning Company where he slowly worked his way up a little. One day his manager came to him and said, "Phil, the Benson Company is outdoing us. They get twice the business. Benson has advertised for help. I want you to apply to them for a job. Study the methods of their manager and report to me every night. When you come back here I will advance you a couple of places and you can have twenty dollars a month more pay." Phil was swept off his feet at first by his good luck, but by the time he had reached his room he was looking at things from another point of view. That night he fought it out with himself and the next morning he told the manager that he would not take advantage of Benson in that way. The manager said, "Very well, you lose your position here," and Phil replied, "Very well. Perhaps I shall starve, but if I do it will at least be an honorable death." It happened that Mr. Glenning overheard their conversation, and that was the beginning of all good things for Phil. When my uncle died several years later, he left us all of his money. It was then that the firm of Philip Laughton and Co. became known to New York. Do you know who forms the company? Mother and I. All of our money went in with Phil's, and the watchword of our firm is "Honesty, integrity, and a fair deal by every man."

CLEMENT. Why did you tell me this story?

JOYCE. I want the information you obtained from Dorothea before you are led to making a dishonorable use of it.

CLEMENT. Miss Laughton, you have won your case, but you don't know what I am giving up. (*Hands her his notebook.*) I had more reasons than one for wishing to make good. Well, I must be going. I promise you ——

JOYCE. No, don't go. I have something that I want you to do. Come in this way with me.

(*Exeunt*, C.)

(*Enter* HAYWOOD *and* MARY, L.)

HAYWOOD (*looking around*). Tom isn't here? Nor his wife? Strange proceedings in this house, I must say. Mary, have you seen Tom since dinner?

MARY. No, sir.

HAYWOOD. Nice of him to hide himself when he knows that I want to go over these papers. (*Takes a package of papers from his pocket; begins to look them over.*) Have you a pencil and note-book?

MARY. Yes, sir. No, sir. I don't know, sir.

HAYWOOD. Don't know? Why, they are right in your hand. What's the matter with you, Mary?

MARY (*in a low voice*). Nothing.

(*He places his papers on the telephone table and walks toward* MARY. *Regards her closely.*)

HAYWOOD. Nothing? Why, you have been crying!

MARY. Mr. Haywood, you can hear!

HAYWOOD. I can hear? Why, so I can! Well, did you ever? Just what the doctor said! Say something more, Mary.

MARY. Why—er,—I—I can't think of anything to say.

HAYWOOD. Mary, I should say you had suddenly taken leave of your senses. Come! Let's go into the library and see if we can find Tom in there.

(*Exeunt*, R. HAYWOOD *forgets his papers.*)

(*Enter* NORDICA, C. *She has on* MARION'S *coat and hat. She stands in front of a glass and admires herself. Hears some one coming; kneels back of a large chair*, R. MARION *enters*, L., *with manuscript of play in her hand.*)

MARION (*posing near* NORDICA, *who looks around the chair at her in astonishment*). "I see it! It is there! It is there!"

(*Enter* DOROTHEA, C.)

DOROTHEA. Goodness, Marion, what is the matter?

MARION. Oh, Dorothy, I'm learning a part, and the more I study the less I know. Do hold this book and see if I know all of my lines. Here's the place where I steal the

papers. Now watch me. (*Takes the papers which* HAYWOOD *has left on table.*) How does this look?

(*Exaggerated performance of stealing papers; takes them from table to divan or chair down* L., *and slips them under a cushion.*)

(*Enter* AMES, L.; *stands watching her.*)

DOROTHEA. Looks about like the Turkey trot.

MARION (*turning over pages of manuscript*). I'll try this scene. It is my worst.

AMES (*coming forward*). Well, if it's any worse than this last, you had better apply for a job with (*name of local theatre*).

(*Exit* NORDICA, R., *leaving hat behind chair. She attracts* DOROTHEA'S *attention. As* AMES *and* MARION *talk, unseen by them,* DOROTHEA *walks over to chair; finds the hat; puts it on; admires herself in glass; exit,* C.)

MARION. Oh, Hugh, I'm so glad you have come in. I didn't know where you had gone. I want to tell you something.

AMES. I'm at your service, fair maid.

MARION. Oh, please don't talk nonsense! I'm terribly worried about something. Perhaps you will think that it is a little thing, but I want your advice.

AMES. I will give you the best I can.

MARION. Of course you know all about Oliver Shepard, the president of the H. and C.?

AMES. Well, rather!

MARION. You remember that I didn't go in to dinner with you? (AMES *nods.*) When I came in here a young woman was sitting at the telephone. She had on an apron, but she didn't look like a servant nor speak like one. She called some number in Schuyler and asked for Oliver Shepard.

AMES. By Jove! She didn't mention the name of the person to whom she telephoned, did she?

MARION. She was talking to somebody named Philip. Should I tell Kit? She has so many things to worry her that I don't like to add anything more.

AMES. No, don't say anything to her. Excuse me. I shall have to get my father. (*Goes to telephone.*) Brook-

lyn 399. Yes. (*Pause.*) Hello! Kent? Is father at home? I'd like to speak to him. (*Aside.*) Good luck!— Hello! Is that you, dad? (*Enter* HAYWOOD, R.; *stands looking at* AMES *in astonishment.*) Can you meet me in New York in about an hour? I'm down at Tom Haywood's, and I will take the next train up. Shepard is in New York, and I think I know where! (*Rushes out,* L.)

(*Enter* MARY, R. HAYWOOD *starts toward table; runs into* MARION; *he dances back and forth in front of her; waves his arms.*)

HAYWOOD. Stop him! Stop him! The other way, Mary! (*Exit* MARY, L.) Don't let him escape! (MARION *finally exits* L., *calling,* "*Wait, Hugh, wait!*" HAYWOOD *reaches table.*) He has taken the papers! Stop him! Stop him!

(*Exit* HAYWOOD, L.)

(*Enter* KATHERINE *and* AURELIA, C.)

AURELIA. My dear, I must congratulate you upon your husband and your cook, but I'm afraid I can't say the same of your maid.

KATHERINE. Nordica? Why, what has she done?

AURELIA. She spilled soup on the left side of my gown. Salad dressing on the right. Stepped on my foot and poured coffee down my neck.

KATHERINE. Aunt, I'm so sorry. I hope your dress isn't ruined.

AURELIA. Don't mention it, my dear. It is of no consequence. I will send the gown to a cleanser. And that reminds me ——

(MARION *rushes in* L.)

MARION. Oh, Kit, something dreadful has happened! I was telling Hugh about a girl, and Mr. Haywood heard me, and now Hugh has gone, and what will Tom say? And how shall I get back to school?

KATHERINE. What are you talking about? Who was the girl?

MARION. I don't know who she was, but she knows Oliver Shepard.

KATHERINE. Marion, are you crazy?

MARION. No, but I think I am going to be. I must get my things and go back to Crofton, but how? How?

(*Exit*, R., *followed by* KATHERINE.)

AURELIA. Extraordinary! (*Follows* KATHERINE *off* R.)

(*Enter* TOM *and* HAYWOOD, L.)

HAYWOOD. He's gone! You've let him escape and he has my papers! I shall go mad! What was he doing in this house?

TOM (*loud*). That's just what we have been trying to find out.

HAYWOOD. Stop yelling in my ear. I can hear as well as you can.

TOM. You can? Why, how long ——

HAYWOOD. Never mind about that! Don't you understand that my papers are gone? Our plans lost? What was that scamp's name?

TOM. He said his name was Clement.

HAYWOOD. Said? Whom did he say it to?

TOM. Gosh! I don't seem to recall. I think it must have been Buttons.

HAYWOOD. Buttons? Call him at once! Do you hear? Ring for Buttons.

TOM. Yes, sir. (*Rings.*)

HAYWOOD. This is an outrage! A high-handed outrage!

TOM. How do you know that Clement has your papers?

HAYWOOD. Why, I left them right there (*pointing to table*) not five minutes ago! Come! I'm not going to stand here all night. If your servants can't come to you we will go to them, and I will make that Buttons wish he had never been born.

(*Enter* AURELIA, R., *as* HAYWOOD *and* TOM *rush out* C.)

AURELIA. Extraordinary! Perfectly extraordinary! (MARY *enters*, R.) Young woman, can you tell me the meaning of the commotion in this house?

MARY. No, I am sure I can't! I wish I were in New York.

(*Enter* MARION *and* KATHERINE, R. MARION *has her coat on.*)

MARION. Where is my hat? Where is my hat? And how am I going to get back to school? Kit, are you sure there isn't another train?

KATHERINE (*examining a time-table she has in her hand*). Of course I am. There's just one more train out of this place to-night, and that goes up to New York.

MARION. What a mess to be in! Miss Bickford will kill me, and I have lost my new hat!

(*Enter* DOROTHEA, C. *She has on* MARION'S *hat, and a long coat that drags on the floor, and carries a cane.*)

DOROTHEA (*dancing across the stage*). "I wants to be an actor-lady, star in the play, up on Broadway."

(*Exit*, R.)

MARION (*chasing her*). Dorothea Symonds, give me my hat!

AURELIA. Katherine, perhaps you will be kind enough to explain ——

(*Enter* HAYWOOD, C.)

HAYWOOD. You didn't see that scamp, Mary?

MARY. No, sir!

KATHERINE. What has happened?

HAYWOOD. Then he has gone!

TOM (*dragging* CLEMENT *into room*, C.). No, he hasn't! I've got him!

HAYWOOD. You have? Why, Tom, what's the matter with you? This isn't the fellow!

TOM. It isn't?

HAYWOOD. Certainly not!

TOM. Why, great Scott, it must have been Ames.

HAYWOOD. Ames? Ames? Any relation to Franklyn Ames?

TOM. Yes; his son.

HAYWOOD. That accounts for it. It is Franklyn Ames and his Western Company who have opposed all of our plans. Young Ames has gone up to New York to meet his father, and they are going to see Oliver Shepard, and he has all of my papers with him!

CLEMENT. Well, why don't you chase after him? Shep-

ard is at some number in Schuyler. If you don't believe me, ask Miss Laughton.

HAYWOOD. What are you talking about?

TOM (*to* CLEMENT). Who are you, and what are you doing in my house?

MARY. You needn't speak to him that way. He isn't doing any harm in your house. I've known him for a long time, and he is one of the best fellows that ever lived.

CLEMENT. Mr. Haywood, I'm on the "Spy," and I came down here to get an interview with your father. Although I didn't quite understand, your wife ——

KATHERINE. Yes, I'm certainly to blame. I mistook Mr. Clement for Hugh's chauffeur. I remember that he tried to explain, and I wouldn't give him any chance.

HAYWOOD. But how did Ames happen to be in this house?

KATHERINE. I'll make a clean breast of the whole thing. You wrote Tom that you would like to have the house quiet, and we received a message that Hugh Ames was on his way out here with one of my friends. Rather than have you disturbed, I entertained them in another part of the house. I have done the best I could, and I'm sorry that I wasn't more successful.

HAYWOOD (*to* KATHERINE). You are very clever to entertain two parties at the same time, and I thank you for your consideration of my wishes. And now to get after young Ames and ——

(*Enter* DAVID, L., NORDICA, R. *She has hat and coat on, carrying bandbox.*)

NORDICA. Mis' Haywood, I'se about to take mah deperture. I wouldn' stay no longer fo' no amount yo' could offer. Yo' can send mah check care ob Mis' Carey. Dat gal dat's a-visitin' yo'-all tried ter steal somepin', but she hed ter hide it 'cause her fellah wuz a-lookin'. (*Pulls* HAYWOOD'S *papers from under seat of chair or divan.*) Yo'-all please notice dat I ain't carryin' dem away in mah bandbox.

(HAYWOOD *takes the papers.*)

(*Exit* NORDICA, L. *Telephone rings.*)

HAYWOOD. My papers!

TOM (*answering telephone*). Hello! Yes! Who? Mrs. who? Mrs.? No, there's no one here by that ——

(*Enter* JOYCE, L.)

JOYCE. Tom, let me have that, quick! (*Sits down at telephone.*) Hello! Yes. Oh, hello! Yes, yes! Are you? Well, listen, dear! There's a young man here, newspaper reporter. Will you talk to him, please? Exclusive, you know. All right. Just a minute. (*Rises.*) Mr. Clement, Oliver Shepard is at the other end of the line ——

ALL. What?

JOYCE. And you are the only reporter who knows that he is in New York.

CLEMENT (*nearly falling down getting to the telephone*). Hello! Yes, sir! Clement, New York "Spy." Your what? (*Glances up at* JOYCE *in surprise. She laughs and nods.*) Yes, sir. I'll be there. I'd fly if I could! All right. I'll tell her. Good-bye. (*Rises.*) I'm going up to New York on the next train. Mr. Shepard is going to wait for me, and as soon as we have talked, he's coming down here.

HAYWOOD. Thank heaven!

JOYCE. Mr. Haywood, do you need Mary any more tonight?

HAYWOOD. Mary? No.

JOYCE. Mr. Clement, why don't you take Mary up to New York with you?

CLEMENT. I don't believe she wants to go.

MARY. Yes, I do, Joe.

CLEMENT (*joyously*). Come on, then! We'll have to run for that train.

(*Enter* MARION, R., *with her hat on, followed by* DOROTHEA.)

KATHERINE (*to* CLEMENT). Wait a minute! (*Looks at time-table.*) There's a train!

MARION. Where? When?

KATHERINE. From New York to Crofton. You can just make it. Mr. Clement, take Miss Hereford with you and put her onto the Crofton train.

CLEMENT. All right. The more the merrier. (*Exeunt* MARION *and* MARY, L. *To* JOYCE.) I haven't words to

express to you what I feel, but from the bottom of my heart I thank you, Mrs. Shepard.

(*Exit* L., *in a hurry.*)

ALL. What?

KATHERINE. What does he mean?

JOYCE. Just what he says.

HAYWOOD. You are Oliver Shepard's wife?

JOYCE. Yes.

HAYWOOD. Then, this last month, he has ——

JOYCE. Been on his honeymoon.

HAYWOOD (*sitting down suddenly*). Great Scott!

KATHERINE. You might have told me, Joyce.

JOYCE. I did try to, Kit, several times. You were so excited that you wouldn't listen. I had to come East yesterday because my aunt died a month ago, and I didn't know it until this week. She has left the greater part of her fortune to her grandson. She knew that I was going to be married, and she appointed Oliver his guardian. Tom, I want you to help me find the grandson. His name is Andrews—David Solomon Andrews.

KATHERINE. What?

TOM. Well, we won't have to look far. Mrs. Shepard, this is David Solomon Andrews.

(*Places his hand on* DAVID'S *shoulder.*)

JOYCE (*laughing*). What? Buttons?

DAVID. Ye-es. Look here, you knew all the time.

JOYCE. I suspected it, I confess. Will you forgive me?

DAVID. Well, I guess. (*They shake hands.*)

TOM. What about taking your grandmother's money, Dave?

DAVID. Well, I guess it's mine!

JOYCE. Good boy. Mrs. Haywood, as much as we regret to, we shall be obliged to give you notice. I am afraid you will have to advertise for other help.

CURTAIN

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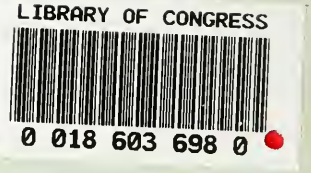

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